

CITY OF LEWISTON  
PLANNING BOARD MEETING  
MINUTES for March 14, 2011

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- I. **ROLL CALL:** The meeting was held in the City Council Chambers on the First Floor of City Hall and was called to order at 5:30 p.m. Chairperson, Lucy Bisson, chaired the meeting.

**Members in Attendance:** Lucy Bisson, Bruce Damon, Denis Fortier, Paul Robinson, Eric Potvin, and Kevin Morissette

**Members Absent:** Trinh Burpee

**Associate Member Present:** Michael Marcotte and Sandra Marquis

**Staff Present:** David Hediger, City Planner, Gil Arsenault, Director of Planning & Code and Cathy Lekberg, Administrative Assistant, Economic & Community Development

Lucy appointed Sandra Marquis as voting member for this meeting in lieu of Trinh Burpee being absent.

- II. **ADJUSTMENT TO THE AGENDA:** None

- III. **CORRESPONDENCE:** Bates College submitted a list of programs and events and Denis Theriault submitted a map of 256 Bartlett Street.

The following motion was made:

**MOTION:** by **Bruce Damon** to accept the submittals from Bates College and Denis Theriault. Second by **Paul Robinson**.

**VOTED:** 7-0 (Passed)

- IV. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:** None

- V. **OTHER BUSINESS:**

- a. **Discussion of the Bates College Master Plan** – Paul Farnsworth gave a brief description of the events and programs that the Bates College has in place. He stated that at the Harvard Center for Community Partnership they have various programs. He stated that half of all students engage in academically-based community work during their time there. He stated in 2009-2010, 709 Bates students were involved in more than 39,994 hours of academically-based community work through 44 courses. He stated also in 2009-2010, 9,340 documented hours of volunteer service were given by Bates students. He stated that more than 13,000 people visited the Bates -Morse Mountain Conservation Area which is home to two endangered bird species. He stated that over the course of 2009-2010 and the summer of 2010, Bates hosted over 100 different events which welcomed more than 9,000 members of local state, national and international communities to campus.

Pam Wichroski showed the Board maps of the Campus and explained what they will be doing in their Ten Year Plan. She stated the plan could change as they start working with the planning board with the details. She stated they are looking to incorporate more student housing and they have met with City staff and held open campus meetings to discuss the plan. It was agreed they would like to increase the housing and quality of housing for the students. She stated they have an aging Science facility that needs to be upgraded and they would like to merge the Math and Science programs into one building. She stated they are looking to add 200 additional off street parking spaces. They want to add them in places where it will work better for the faculty and students. They also want to improve the use of open spaces. She stated they want to replace the housing on Wood Street and also keep the housing on Frye Street as a mixed neighborhood feel for the students. They would also like to upgrade the housing on Campus Avenue. She stated the project they want to complete first is to build housing on No. Bardwell Street next to Garcelon Field. They want to add student housing in that area and vacate 265 students in the Wood Street area. She stated they have selected an architect for this and will be coming before the Planning Board in the fall. She stated they plan on completing this project in the fall of 2014, and the students will be able to move in. She also stated the chapel is in need of repairs and this will start at the end of the month. They will be renovating the stone tower and the roof. She stated they also want to provide better common spaces for the students.

She stated in the long term, they would like to put another wing on Page Hall. In Lane Hall, they would like to move the administration office out and use that for student housing.

Bruce asked if there would be three dorm buildings around Garcelon Field and Pam stated there is only room for two. She stated these plans will be continuously changing and that they are trying to make the plan flexible.

Paul asked about the new dorm buildings on College Street and what would the life expectancy of these buildings. Pam stated the infrastructure should last 100 years, but the day to day maintenance will be less. Paul asked if the freshman students are allowed to drive on campus the first year and Pam stated they are not. They do not get permits to park on-site.

She also stated that when the Science Building is completed, they would like to add underground parking under the building. Denis asked if there were any plans for the housing across Russell Street and Pam stated that will stay the same. Gil asked about the west side of College Street and Pam stated there are no immediate plans to renovate there.

- b. **Request by Steve Morgan, Keller Williams on behalf of Floyd Jenkins to discuss the possible disposition of 10,000 square feet of City owned land located behind 256 Bartlett Street.**

Bruce stated he had a problem with this item. He stated the Planning Board should not be hearing this item and that it is premature to discuss. He stated that the Board has a procedure to follow to bring this to the Planning Board and it was not done. He stated that they have not met with the School Superintendent and that this land could be the entranceway to the new school. He stated in this case, the disposition of city property is solely for an individual and a landlord. Denis Fortier stated he agreed with Bruce in that this is premature. Paul stated it seemed a stretch to be part of the Longley School would utilize this area. Bruce stated this property could be used as it is part of Franklin Pasture. Paul stated he was concerned the land could sit for a long time, and that we should meet with the School Board to get their position. Lucy stated that she would not want to sell it only to buy it back later. Paul asked if this is sitting vacant, the City is not generating any taxes and Lucy stated it is part of Franklin Pasture. Denis asked what the small buildings are behind Mailhot's building on City land and Gil stated they are storage containers and will be removed in the spring. Paul stated that at least the abutters should be notified about a request like this.

The following motion was made:

**MOTION:** by **Bruce Damon** not to hear this item at this time and that the City's procedure should be followed for dispositions and abutter's notified before it is brought back to the Planning Board. Second by **Denis Fortier**.

**VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)**

Denis Theriault of 239 and 245 Bartlett Street said he is interested in purchasing a portion of Franklin Pasture and how does he pursue this. Lucy suggested he contact staff to discuss the process.

c. **Request by Steve Morgan, Keller Williams on behalf of Nancy Callahan and Sarto Sasseville to discuss the possible rezoning of 650 and 656 Main Street from Office Residential (OR) to Highway Business (HB).**

Steve Morgan showed the Board a map of the area and also showed the separation of Highway Business and Office Residential. He stated there are no drug stores or retail stores in this area and he wanted to see if this would be allowable. He stated he does not want to find potential business buyers, if the Board is not willing to make the change.

Denis asked if we change the zoning to HB, would it make homes non-conforming. He asked if this was similar to the Atwood Street rezoning. David stated that in the HB, multi-family housing is not allowed and in the OR, retail business would not be allowed. Lucy stated that office space would still be allowed in the HB. Kevin stated that the traffic pattern may change. Eric Potvin asked David if he could make another matrix as to what is allowed in the zones. Denis asked whether the entire side of Main

Street from Strawberry Ave should be rezoned. Steve stated he was not looking for a yes or no on this, but wanted to get a feel from the Board. Bruce stated he was concerned about the change in traffic and also stated this could increase traffic if retail stores are allowed. He stated there would be no opportunity to put signalization there or increase the width of the street. David stated this area will be striped for a center turn lane in 2011, but traffic could be a concern. Bruce stated there is not a clear answer for this and he is concerned about the traffic. Steve stated he has clients that want to sell their property there. Mike stated there are a lot of vacant buildings in the City in the HB zoning that could be used for retail. Mike stated that we need to get a formal request so that abutters are notified. Steve stated he was just trying to get a feel of how the Board would react to this. Bruce stated the Board needs to be sensitive to what would happen if this was done. David stated this was very similar to the Atwood Street rezoning.

**d. Discussion regarding Atwood Street rezoning and Zoning and Land Use Updates/Matrix.**

David explained the transitional zoning/overlay list he gave the Board. He stated they would need to decide whether an area should be an overlay or a new district. He stated this was to get the members thinking about ideas and provide suggestions. David stated that an overlay could keep some businesses from being non-conforming. Lucy stated they would also have to be specific about buffering. Lucy stated if they do an overlay, it might not allow a lot of uses that are in the areas such as bars and drive-through restaurants that would bother abutters. David stated the ordinances would have to be specific. Bruce stated that mixed residential opens up problems with noise complaints from abutters. Lucy suggested an overlay rather than straight rezoning. Denis stated the overlays should have strict restrictions. Bruce asked if we are willing to increase retail, are we willing to accept an increase in traffic. If so, an overlay would make sense.

Lucy stated that East Avenue has three different districts on one street and is a major artery. She stated this street should be developed. Bruce stated if we changed East Avenue, there would be much more traffic there. Lucy suggested stopping people from taking a left turn onto East Avenue from the High School. She stated this was very dangerous. David stated this could be brought up at another meeting with the School Department.

Kevin asked for the Board's opinion on the matrix having a density cap. He stated he is not against low income housing but do not want to give away our more desirable properties for subsidized housing. He stated developer of The Loft at Bates Mill could come back and build 100 more of these mixed housing buildings. David stated that the way ordinances are typically drafted you have to have a percentage of affordable housing in

the area. Gil stated affordable housing in the communities is usually subsidized because it cannot be done without it.

Bruce stated that we need to discuss a few items at a time and discuss them in more depth. He stated there is no set answer to all of these areas. Lucy stated we should have staff give the Board some suggestions. Bruce suggested looking at one or two areas at a time.

Lucy suggested discussing East Avenue at the next meeting and David stated that the Atwood Street rezoning should be first, then East Avenue. Lucy agreed and asked the members to bring their concerns, ideas and suggestions to the next meeting regarding the Atwood Street rezoning.

**c. Any other business Planning Board Members may have relating to the duties of the Lewiston Planning Board.**

1. Bruce stated that he serves on the Energy Committee and they have twelve action items that they are working on to complete. He provided a copy of those items to the Board. He stated that some of the items would involve the Planning Board and he listed a few of the items would be enforcing land use policies that reduce sprawl, promote transportation options, alternative energy, building code improvements, energy star equipment for the City, sustainable building practices and a few other issues listed on the form. He stated he wanted to bring these issues to the Board so they can give him input on how to complete these items.
2. Paul stated he serves on the Riverfront Master Plan Committee and stated an RFP was sent out to 19 potential developers and 15 were received. He stated the Committee members are reviewing these proposals and he stated he will keep the Board informed of what happens next.
3. David asked if the Board was comfortable with the School Supervisor meeting being held on April 4, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers and most members will be able to attend and were agreeable.

**VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- a. Discussion of YPLAA Survey.
- b. Discuss proposed open space revisions, consolidation of the SR district, and adoption of the matrix (recommendation to table the matter to future date).

**VII. READING OF MINUTES:**

The following motion was made:

**MOTION:** by **Denis Fortier** to accept the February 14, 2011 minutes as presented. Second by **Eric Potvin**.

**VOTED:** **7-0 (Passed)**

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT:** The following motion was made to adjourn.

**MOTION:** by **Denis Fortier** that this meeting adjourns at 7:20 p.m. Second by **Sandra Marquis**.

**VOTED:** **7-0 (Passed).**

The next regularly scheduled meeting is for Monday, March 28, 2011 at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Denis E. Fortier, Secretary